Administrator Gina McCarthy's Visit to Region 6

Issue: <u>Camp Minden – Explo Systems, Minden, LA</u>

Background/Status:
A contractor for the Army, Explo, failed to properly dispose and store of more than 18,000,000 pounds of explosives (15,000,000 pounds from the Army). An Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) was agreed to by the Army, State, and EPA to destroy the propellant by controlled, open burn (Judgment Fund). The community voiced concerns regarding the selected technology. EPA granted a 90 day extension to the AOC deadlines and opened up the disposal technology discussions to include local citizens, elected officials, and other concerned citizens of Louisiana. The Louisiana National Guard is currently reviewing bids on alternative disposal treatments (versus controlled open burn). In addition, EPA signed additional AOC's with PRPs to address more than 3,000,000 pounds of explosive-related material at the site. The M6 propellant and the clean burning igniter, impacted by moisture, have been identified as a concern. Louisiana Military Department has taken immediate action to vent the areas and is conducting a magazine assessment in the next 30 days to evaluate the situation.

Message
- Abandoned 15,000,000 pounds of expired Army M6 propellant and approximately 320,000 pounds of CBI at a National Guard Training Base in Louisiana.
- Community objection to controlled open burning, the routine method for DOD disposal of expired propellant.
- The Louisiana National Guard is currently reviewing bids on alternative disposal treatments (versus controlled open burn).

Issue: <u>Tulane National Primate Research Center Investigation</u>

Background/Status:
In November of 2014, two non-human primates (rhesus macaques) at TNPRC were infected with Burkholderia pseudomallei (Bp) and one of them was euthanized. According to the CDC, Bp is not transmitted between humans or animals making the likelihood of becoming ill from the bacteria low. TNPRC was unsure how the macaques became infected. CDC and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) were brought in to investigate. In February, EPA mobilized to the site and developed a sampling plan for the collection of air, water and soil samples in targeted areas in and around the macaque enclosures where the bacteria would most likely be present were it to have been released outside the laboratory. TNPRC implemented the plan and CDC conducted the analysis. All samples collected were negative for the presence of Bp. On March 13, CDC released a statement saying, "CDC has found no evidence to date to suggest the organism was released into the surrounding environment and therefore it's unlikely there is any threat to the general population."

Message
- EPA, acting as an assisting Federal Agency to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), assisted in the investigation at the Tulane National Primate Research

Center (TNPRC) in February of this year. EPA developed a sampling strategy for TNPRC to implement and provided oversight of TNPRC personnel in the collection of environmental samples (air, water and soil) in targeted areas to help determine if the bacteria Burkholderia pseudomallei had been released outside of the research facility. All of the environmental samples collected were negative for the presence of the bacteria Burkholderia pseudomallei.

- State of Louisiana and TNPRC continue to request additional assistance from EPA in the development of a decontamination plan for the soils in the field cages and for development of an off-site soils and water sampling plan.

Issue: Chemical Recycling, Inc. (CRI) Superfund Site

Background/Status:

The Chemical Recycling Inc. facility operated from 1975-1989 in Wylie. The facility constructed experimental roads on site using spent lead containing solvents. In 1990, PRPs disposed of hazardous substances from drums and tanks as well as the containers and associated tank structures under a 1989 AOC. This emergency action mitigated the immediate threat of hazardous substances that were known to exist at the facility. In 2014, due to changing site conditions and new commercial/residential development, TCEQ requested that EPA perform a removal action at the site. As a result, EPA conducted a sampling event (July 2014) that discovered elevated lead levels throughout the Site.

Message

- EPA has engaged the Chair of the PRP Steering Committee (Site activities are under the direction of a facility coordinator pursuant to previous bankruptcy proceedings) to discuss performance of the removal action.
- The contaminated soils exceed the EPA Industrial Removal Management Levels (800ppm) for lead. Removal and disposal of the contaminated soil is required so that workers on site are protected from adverse health effects from the contamination.

Issue: <u>Libby Asbestos Contaminated Vermiculite Exfoliation Sites</u>

Background/Status:
The W.R. Grace Co. owned and operated the Zonolite Mine, located in Libby, Montana. Vermiculite ore was mined for commercial purposes from the 1920's through 1990. Vermiculite, a naturally occurring fibrous mineral, has been used in lawn, garden, agricultural, and horticultural products; thermal and sound insulation; and construction, insulation, and lightweight packing material. Vermiculite from the Libby mine was contaminated with tremolite-actinolite, generally referred to as Libby amphibole asbestos (LAA). Exposure to asbestos is strongly associated with malignant and nonmalignant respiratory diseases, including asbestosis and mesothelioma. Contaminated Libby vermiculite was shipped to exfoliation facilities in numerous locations throughout the United States,

and reportedly to 18 exfoliation facilities in Region 6.

Message:

- EPA's Removal Program has initiated site assessment activities at Libby vermiculite exfoliation sites in Region 6. These assessments included both soil sampling and activity-based air sampling (ABS). During ABS, samplers mimic soil-disturbing activity, such as gardening or child's play for residential properties, which may actually be conducted at a location, air samples are collected to determine the potential exposure from aerosolized asbestos fibers.
- EPA has completed removal cleanup activities at three sites and is continuing to evaluate 12 other sites.

Issue: New Mexico Uranium Mine Sites

Background/Status:

Tronox sites are uranium mines that were operated by Kerr McGee on tribal (Navajo) and non-tribal lands in New Mexico and in Arizona. There are 50 mines that have been identified in the DOJ settlement with Anadarko Oil (whom acquired Kerr McGee) that are eligible for assessment and cleanup utilizing the settlement trust fund. Twenty-two of the mines are located in New Mexico. Region 6 is evaluating the Tronox sites (non-tribal) in the Ambrosia Lake Sub-District of the Grants Mining District.

The Crossroads site is a residential enclave of primarily Hispanic residents located in McKinley County, New Mexico that was contaminated with excess gamma radiation from mine related wastes from the historic mining operations within the Ambrosia Lake Sub-District. This site is the last of 11 sites that EPA 6 has conducted removal assessments and/or removal actions since 2009. Region 6 has assessed 891 properties and conducted cleanup on 136 of 137 properties that exceeded the cleanup level.

Message

- New Mexico Removal Sites - A Removal action is being completed on the final of 11 residential Sites (tribal and non-tribal) within the Grants Mineral Belt area of northwest New Mexico.

Issue: CES Environmental Services, Inc., Houston, Harris County, TX

Background/Status:

The CES Environmental Services (CES) site is a former chemical recycling facility that is located at 4904 Griggs Road, Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site is surrounded by residential, educational, and commercial properties. CES filed for bankruptcy in 2010. The site has experienced significant vandalism which resulted in releases. In addition to the pungent cresolic/phenolic odors emanating from the site, the site contained wastes within vacuum boxes,

roll-off boxes, frac tanks, aboveground storage tanks (plastic and steel), plastic vats, totes, drums, and miscellaneous containers. These waste are a mixture of acids, bases, hydrocarbons, sulfide bearing waste streams, cresolic/phenolic bearing waste streams, and others. The EPA has been actively and continuously addressing these waste streams since early September 2014 and should be finished in June.

Message:

- Bankrupt Chemical Facility (2010) – Significant waste in Aboveground Storage Tanks, Frac Tanks, Vacuum Boxes, Vats, Totes, Drums, Lab Chemicals, and other miscellaneous containers spread out over an 8 acre property.
- Surrounded by EJ Community and School (Significant Chemical Odors) – These properties share a common fence line.

Issue: <u>St. Rose, Louisiana Community Air Assessment</u>

Background/Status:
On June 8, 2014, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) responded to citizen complaints of an intermittent odor and illnesses in St. Rose, Louisiana. LDEQ identified the Shell/IMTT St. Rose Asphalt Complex as the source of the odor. LDEQ requested EPA assistance in assessing the situation. EPA Region 6 and LDEQ performed air monitoring and sampling in the neighborhoods surrounding the Shell/IMTT facility in St. Rose. LDEQ ordered Shell/IMTT to fix the problem. Citizen complaints continued after mitigation of the odor. At LDEQ's request, EPA R6 performed an independent air assessment of the surrounding communities. EPA R6 completed a 4 day assessment the first week of November 2014. ATSDR Minimal Risk levels (MRLs) were not exceeded for benzene or sulfur dioxide. EPA Region 6 attended a council hearing on February 4, 2015. EPA is working with LDEQ to post the sampling summary on the LDEQ website.

Message

- EPA acknowledges that odor experienced within these communities may pose a nuisance and impact quality of life; however, the data collected indicates that levels of hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide and benzene are all under public health levels of concern.

Issue: <u>Tar Creek Superfund Site</u>
Utilizing State and Tribal Partners as Leads in the Site Cleanup

Background/Status:
The Tar Creek Superfund Site is located in Ottawa County, Oklahoma. The site is a former lead and zinc mining area and consists of the Oklahoma portion of the Tri-State Mining District of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri. The EPA is currently implementing the remedial actions specified in the 2009 Record of Decision for Operable Unit 4, which addresses the mining wastes left from the production of lead and zinc.

A previous remedial action performed by the Quapaw Tribe at the Catholic 40 was the first-ever

remedial action in the nation conducted by a tribe on tribal property. The Catholic 40 is a 40-acre tract of land owned by the Tribe that has cultural and historical significance. This and future remedial actions conducted by the Tribe enhances the tribe's technical capacity to perform remedial actions under the Superfund program.

Message:

- EPA provides funding to Tribal and State partners to implement and complete remedial actions at Tar Creek.
- The Quapaw Tribe will take the construction-lead on tribal trust lands in order to ensure tribal concerns are fully addressed during site cleanup.
- The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) will oversee construction of the residential cleanup on the non-tribal lands. Utilizing the State as the lead for construction builds on the State's capacity to perform remedial action and integrates them fully into the site work.

Issue: <u>North and South Cavalcade Superfund Sites</u>

Background/Status:
The North and South Cavalcade Superfund Sites are located within an industrial corridor just north of downtown Houston, Texas. The sites were two creosoting businesses that operated independently and closed by 1962. Operations at the sites resulted in creosote releases to soil and groundwater. Both sites were listed on the National Priorities List in 1986. Initial Records of Decision (RODs) were signed for both sites in 1988 and both had subsequent ROD amendments. Human exposure is under control at the sites. Contaminated soil has been contained and capped at both locations. There is no exposure to contaminated ground water from either site, onsite or offsite. Drinking water continues to be provided through the City of Houston's public drinking water supply. The source of this water is the Trinity River.

Message

- The EPA and State Representatives will continue to reach out to the community leaders and communities adjacent to the Superfund Sites. EPA will continue to provide information on either site, as requested.

Issue: <u>Onsite Residents at Wilcox Oil Company Superfund Site</u>

Background/Status:

The Wilcox Oil Company (Wilcox) Site includes the inactive and abandoned Lorraine and Wilcox Oil refineries located in Bristow, Creek County, Oklahoma. The property was utilized as a crude oil refinery by these refineries from the mid-1920s to the mid-1960s and comprise 125 acres. These refinery waste-source areas of concern include a backfilled oily waste pond and pit, a breached settling pond, a former pond apparently backfilled with solid refinery waste, and a number of former tank storage areas. The contaminants of concern are lead and organic

compounds (Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH) and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)). There are approximately six residential properties on the site and four residential properties that border the site. These properties are located within the former process and tank storage areas.

Message

- EPA is using removal authorities to address areas of the site where there is an immediate threat to residents.
- EPA is also meeting with the residents to discuss residential property sampling, fencing of waste source material to restrict access, and to provide information on and respond to questions related to the contaminants at the site.

Issue: <u>Arkwood, Inc. Superfund Site Dioxin Re-evaluation</u>

Background/Status:
The site conducted wood treating operations from 1962-1984 and was contaminated with: dioxin, pentachlorophenol (PCP), and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons. Previous soil remediation was completed in 1995. EPA changed national dioxin soil remediation goals in 2012.

Message:

- Region 6 is working with the responsible party and the State of Arkansas to conduct a thorough evaluation of the site to ensure the continued protection of human health in light of the revised dioxin remediation goals.

Issue: <u>Revitalization at the RSR Corporation Superfund Site, Dallas, Texas</u>

Background/Status:
Cleanup of the RSR Superfund site has had a major revitalization and economic impact in West Dallas. The RSR Corporation Superfund Site was an abandoned secondary lead smelter facility located in an environmental justice community in west Dallas. For approximately 50 years, the secondary lead smelting facility processed used batteries and other lead-bearing materials into pure lead, lead alloys, and other lead products. The RSR Superfund Site area of concern spanned more than 13 square miles and included a mixture of residential and multi-family public housing, commercial, and light industrial properties. Lead was the primary contaminant of concern. Cleanup of five operable units was complete in 2004.

Message:

- EPA initiated a Superfund Reuse Initiative (SRI) Local Economics Case Study in 2015, to quantify the impacts of this revitalization.
- Once the site was remediated, the Dallas Housing Authority invested more than $100,000,000 in public housing and services at the site. Goodwill Industries of Dallas built a distribution center and employment center on the site as well.

- Redevelopment includes: public and private residential properties; educational opportunities; an innovative restaurant concept with local chefs and a restaurant "incubator"; a local brewery, libraries, parks, and much more.
- The data and findings reported in the 2015 RSR Corporation Local Economic Impact Case Study will showcase the impact of the RSR Superfund Site cleanup and its impact in the revitalization of the community of West Dallas.

Issue: <u>San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site, Harris County, Texas</u>

Background/Status:
The site includes a set of impoundments built in the mid-1960s for disposal of paper mill pulp wastes containing dioxin. In 2008, the site was added to the National Priorities List. In 2009, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order to International Paper Company and McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corporation—the potentially responsible parties for the site—to conduct a Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. A Superfund time-critical removal action was completed in July of 2011 to place an armor rock cap to prevent the further release of dioxins into the environment.

Completion of the site investigation and assessment of cleanup alternatives is expected this summer. The Record of Decision, which selects the site remedy, will follow in the fall of 2015. The community believes that the contaminated material should be removed from the San Jacinto River.

Message:
- EPA is utilizing the Corps of Engineers to perform a thorough analysis of site information and modelling conducted by responsible parties in order to assist in determining the best technical solution for the site. EPA co-leads a site Community Advisory Committee including; the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Harris County, the Port of Houston, Houston Galveston Area Council, and the Galveston Bay Foundation to fully engage the stakeholders in this process.

Issue: <u>East 67th Street Superfund Site Remedial Action</u>

Background/Status:
EPA is currently implementing two remedial action projects at the site that are scheduled for completion in April 2015. The first remedial action project includes the installation of 15 residential water supply wells and the plugging and closure of 19 active and inactive water supply wells to prevent exposure to tetrachlorethene in the ground water. The second remedial action project includes the installation of 11 injection wells for the delivery of emulsified vegetable oil that will be used to enhance bacterial growth and natural degradation of tetrachloroethene and other contaminants in the upper zone aquifer.

Message
- EPA completed a remedial action that will provide clean drinking water for residents whose source of water was contaminated by tetrachloroethene.

- EPA is implementing a remedial action that will begin on-site bioremediation of the contaminated ground water to treat the highest concentrations as part of a phased cleanup process.

Issue: <u>Sandy Beach Road Superfund Site Remedial Action</u>

Background/Status:
The EPA is currently implementing two remedial action projects at the site that are scheduled for completion in May and July 2015. The first remedial action project includes the installation of five residential water supply wells and the plugging and closure of one active water supply well to prevent exposure to trichloroethene in the ground water. The second remedial action project includes the installation of a soil vapor extraction system in the source area to reduce contaminant migration and assist in long-term ground water cleanup.

Message
- EPA completed a remedial action that will provide clean drinking water wells for residents whose source of water was contaminated by trichloroethene.
- EPA is constructing the soil vapor extraction system that will remove source area contamination to reduce the highest ground water concentrations as part of a phased cleanup process.